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an informal interview with

JOE PIRO

This is the twenty-first in a series of informal interviews with famous personalities from the world of dance. The following interview took place at the Dance Masters of America's national convention during August, 1958, at the Lafayette Hotel in Long Beach, California.

Q. Mr. Piro, when did you first begin your Ballroom dance career?

A. Well, I've been dancing for twenty-three years.

Q. Didn't you win a Harvest Moon Ball contest a number of years back?

A. Yes, in 1942 I took the International Jitterbug Championship in Los Angeles, California — and I'm still going strong.

Q. Then you started your career by winning the Harvest Moon event?

A. No, I danced long before that. However, you might say that winning the Harvest Moon contest was the big turning point in my career. You see, even in the Navy I was considered champion dancer of the fleet. I challenged all comers. Probably where I gained my greatest recognition as a Ballroom dancer was at the Stage Door Canteen during the war, and later in Hollywood at the Hollywood Canteen. It was there that I danced with many of the stars such as Jane Withers, Shirley Booth, Constance Moore, Judy Garland, Alicia Markova.

Q. Alicia Markova, the famous ballerina?

A. That's right. We used to dance the Jitterbug together. In fact, we did a couple of shows at the Hotel Roosevelt in New York. Then there's Antony Tudor, the ballet dancer. He enjoys taking lessons from me in the Latin dances.

Q. While we're discussing ballet dancers and their interest in Ballroom dancing, I'm curious to know whether you have ever had any work in Ballet, Mr. Piro?

A. Yes, I had about fifty or sixty classes in Ballet. It helped my Ballroom dancing. It helped in the control of my body.

Q. With whom did you study Ballroom dancing?

A. I studied with Ann Lango. She was known as the Queen of the Rumba. Then there was Jerry Girardo and Barry Del Rey.

Q. You're famous for your Latin American dances; isn't that right?

A. Yes, I specialize in Mambo and Cha Cha. In fact, I'm in the Encyclopedia Brittanica on Mambo.

Q. Did you contribute information on the subject to the Encyclopedia Brittanica?

A. Yes. Photographs and all.

Q. I suppose this may sound foolish to you, but what is your favorite type of Ballroom dance?

A. Jitterbug. It's a very vivacious dance.

Q. Do you think there will always be some form of Jitterbug in America?

A. Oh, sure. Without jitterbug the kids would have nothing. This Rock and Roll is only an extension of Jitterbug.

Q. Aren't you known nationally as "Killer Joe"?

A. That's right.

Q. How did you get the name, "Killer Joe"?

A. During the war I used to dance, as I said, at the Stage Door Canteen and I used to wear down three or four partners a night. One would break a leg, another suffered a dropped stomach. Various things would happen to my partners. I danced them so hard that they would actually fall into their seats from exhaustion. You might say I really killed 'em. We used to have what we called a jam session. A bunch of service men from various countries and myself would get together and hold these Jitterbug jam sessions. We used to really wreck the girls. It got so that when they heard I would be there to dance they would say to me, 'Now, Joe, I'm dancing three minutes with you and that's it!'

Q. I take it that you must have opened and closed the Canteen?

A. That's right. They had three shifts of girls to dance with the fellows and I'd wear all my partners down. That's where my name Killer Joe came from, and it's stuck with me ever since.

Q. Do you still teach at the Palladium in New York City?

A. Yes. This is my tenth year at the Palladium.

Q. Isn't the Palladium known as the "Home of the Mambo"?

A. Yes. It's known as such throughout the world. It might interest your readers to know that since starting my classes at the Palladium I have taught over 200,000 people.

Q. You must have taught many famous people at the Palladium?

A. That's right. Anna Mangnani, Sammy Davis, Jr., in fact we just had Princess Saroya up there before I left for the DMA convention.

Q. I believe our Ballroom readers would like to know how you have been able to keep a dance contest as well as a dance class going for ten consecutive years?

A. The first requisite is to keep your students amused. Many of them attend classes because they are lonesome. They want to meet somebody with similar interests. They want to dance and consequently they hope to meet someone who feels about dancing as they do. Actually, dancing is a national pastime. Even greater than baseball. Wherever you go there's dancing. No one wants to feel old any more. We have people from eight to eighty who take dancing. Anyone can learn to dance, and have fun doing it, regardless of his or her age.

Q. You believe in the saying, then, that "you're only as old as you feel"?

A. I certainly do. People who dance really don't get old. Look at Astaire; he looks the same today as he did thirty years ago. A dancer's thinking is different.

Q. Then you'd say that keeping a student's interest alive is one of the best means of keeping him coming to dance class?

A. That's right. Another thing is not to hold back on your classes. I give close to fifteen steps a night in Cha Cha. Of course, it's important to keep the steps easy. After all, most people are not trying to become exhibitionists. They just want to be able to dance with their group.

Q. How did you get the job teaching at the Palladium, Mr. Piro?

A. When I was dancing at the Havana-Madrid in New York City Mr. Maxwell Hyman came in and said, 'I'm thinking of buying the Palladium; what do you think of it, Joe?' I told him I thought it would be a fabulous place for Latin dancing. He actually did buy it. I suggested to him then that he start Mambo classes at the Palladium, which he did. My first class had eighteen students in it. The second week there were thirty-eight and as we went on we have had as high as five hundred and twenty-five students in a single night. In fact, every teacher that was teaching in New York City used to attend the groups.

Q. How are you able to handle five hundred students in one class? Would you explain this?

A. My wife stands on one side and I stand on the other. We use two directions — the bandstand and the clock. Our steps all are named so that the students know what we're talking about at all times.

Q. The Palladium must hold quite a few hundred people?

A. About fifteen hundred.

Q. Do the students pay extra for the dance lesson?

A. No, just the price of admission. This entitles them to a free dance lesson from 8 to 9 and a show at 11, with dancing to two top bands in between.

Q. Mr. Piro, inasmuch as you are quite an authority on Latin dancing, I wonder if you would tell me whether you think Latins or Americans are the best dancers when it comes to Latin dances?

A. Well, I'd say the American; he's more creative. We take these Latin dances and really style them, more than the Latins do. The average Latin dances these dances the way he feels them, the way the drums are coming in. The footwork is beautiful, but the body is often incongruous. The American people as a whole like to look smart on the dance floor. Take the business man. He doesn't want to get out and bend his body a way over — he wants to look smart.

Q. Currently, what is the most popular dance in New York City?

A. The Cha Cha.

Q. Why do you think this dance has become so popular here in America — aside from its fascinating music rhythms?

A. You've probably noticed that today's dance spots have a very limited area in which to dance. With the average type of fast dancing, which requires considerable traveling, someone is always bumping into you and knocking you off balance. With the Mambo or Cha Cha people pick out one little spot in which to dance, particularly in the night clubs. Actually, in as small a space as two by two they can do an interesting Mambo or Cha Cha.
I'd like to mention that I did a picture, an eighteen-minute short called 'Mambo Madness,' released by Universal. This picture has caught on all around the country and here in New York they bring it back about every six months for a re-showing. This sort of shows how this type of dancing has caught on around the country.

Q. I know you've danced in most of the topflight night clubs, but what I'd like to ask is do you work solo or with a partner?

A. I usually work with an act. I've worked with Sammy Davis, Jr., and a number of other top acts.

Q. On these jobs, do you work alone or with a partner?

A. Usually with a partner, although I also do a solo act.

In the early 1940s Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, who already had been rated "the greatest tap dancer in the world" for more than a quarter of a century, parried a question about his apparent agelessness by saying, "When I'm seventy, I ought to be a pretty fair hoofer." Robinson's ability to tap-dance professionally at an age when most men would not or could not waltz their wives around a floor once was by no means the most spectacular of his accomplishments. Neither was his capacity for making friends with celebrities.

An excerpt from the forthcoming

BILL ROBINSON *King of Tap Dancers*

WATCH FOR IT in an early issue of DANCE DIGEST

Q. Mr. Piro, what tactics do you suggest American wives use to get their husbands to take a few dance lessons?

A. You probably know that men are the hardest things to get into a dance studio. For one reason, they feel they are going to look ridiculous. Which is all wrong. But once they start their lessons they usually like them better than do the wives.

A teacher must build up a man's ego. Don't worry about the woman—she's happy that he's in the studio. Concentrate on the man. Never let him feel that he's making a lot of mistakes. As soon as he feels that way, you might as well take all the lessons and throw them out the window — he just won't come back any more.

As a dance teacher you never want to show how good you are — make the man look good. Teach steps that are easy, and once you have his confidence, you can get him to do anything.

Q. Do you also conduct your own school, Mr. Piro?

A. Yes. It's on 54 West 55th Street and it's called the Joe Piro Dance Studio.

Q. What are your future plans?

A. I'd like to do choreography for musicals. I had a taste of this when I choreographed the numbers for Ralph Meeker and Polly Bergen in "Top Man". It's great, this choreography, and I'd like to make it my future work.

The Signature of Locality

by j marks

THE SAN FRANCISCO OPERA SEASON

There is probably nothing quite as problematic as the general field of "opera ballet". For as many years as this writer can recall, there has been a consitsent argument between the general directors of opera companies and the choreographer commissioned to create the dance sequences in the planned operas for a given season. The argument, as we may suspect, involves the calibre of dance which the choreographer is permitted to offer the productions; the number of hours he is given for rehearsals, the budget for hiring dancers, his control over the nature of costumes for the dancers, and, essentially, the authority he possesses in regard to regulating the interpretation of the scores in matters of tempi and contrasts.

Most of us concerned with the dance are fully aware that the choreographer for the opera is simply a member of the general production staff. His chief task, from the standpoint of the conservative opera company director, is the embellishment of certain musical interludes and crowd scenes at the lowest possible budget and with the slightest imagination possible. For this reason we have all become more than adequately familiar with the traditional "ballet" of the opera stage. And though many members of the audience may be concerned with the abbreviation of choreographic imagination, we have become accustomed to the complacency of opera ballet.

The name Carl Orf has become prominent in the musical-operatic world since the second world war. A German composer of some imagination and, particularly, a sound sense of the theatre, Orf has composed a number of specialized "opera house oratorios" which present the producers with a very specific problem. One of these works, "Carmina Burana," was scheduled for the 1958 season of the San Francisco Opera Company. And, we assume, that in scheduling this contemporary work the opera association was willing to accept the responsibilities which the work very obviously presents to its producers. "Carmina Burana" is not an opera in the usual sense of the term; instead, it possesses the dramatic structure of a mass or oratorio; composed for chorus and soloists on poetic texts which are related only in general subject matter. There is no apparent cause-effect progress of the usual operatic plot. There is no prominent effort toward musical or dramatic characterization. In fact, "Carmina Burana" is constructed in a manner which would lead one to envision its presentation in strict oratorio fashion in a church or college or on a symphonic program, were it not that the composer clearly states in the score his visions of staging and dancing.

This much is clear: in "Carmina Burana" the chorus is static, the soloists are expected to move very little indeed; the orchestra is concealed in the pit. All that remains is the decor and the dancers. Therefore, if "Carmina Burana" is to exist on the opera stage, it must face the demands of theatre imagination and production in a manner quite different from the usual attitude expressed by operatic compositions. Half-hearted, poorly choreographed and rehearsed dances

will not do. The usual prominence of cliches and "line work" will not do. And costumes obviously rented from the local costumers will accomplish very little.

A production such as "Carmina Burana" is a testing ground for the essential theatrical validity of a theatre organization. It seems very apparent that the recent presentation of that musical work by the San Francisco Opera Company demonstrated how very little it understands the requirements of the musical theatre. This demonstration comes as something of a shock to those of us who take pride in the artistic policy of the San Francisco Opera Company, because we have been led to believe in that organization as a somewhat progressive entity, often sponsoring operas too rarely produced in this country. The production, however, of "Carmina Burana" displayed a clearer tendency: what we have taken for progressivism of artistic concept was really nothing but an adequate ability to select off-beat scores of imagination and was not a capacity to realize such scores with imagination. We have been acclaiming the actor while we should have been praising the playwright.

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Much has been said about the nature of Carl Orf's musical gift. He has been criticized abundantly for a repetition of style and method, his work has been unfavorably contrasted with the vast musical imagination of Igor Stravinsky's early opus "Les No-

San Francisco Opera Company's "Carmina Burana"

SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM

Kotche's School of Ballroom Dancing

416 N. HUDSON OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

ces". But whatever we may believe about Orf's essential musical virtue, this much is certain: his music possesses some degree of imagination and quite a degree of theatrical power, considerable novelty of intent, as well as vitality and robust power. These characteristics are not obscured in his music; they exist most overtly. And, we must assume, a production of such works with such characteristics which does not at least intimate an interest in these qualities is simply blind and mute.

"Carmina Burana" as presented by the San Francisco Opera Company is a vast and decadent interplay on mildewed tapestries. Where the score is most novel, the production is most ordinary. The scenic designer appeals to the most commonplace aspect of public response . . . degenerating a masculine, vital rhythmical theatre-piece into an old woman sitting among the ruins of her cheap Victorian imitations of some narrow scheme for the "Glory That Was Greece".

Imagination is a world. And in that world one says Bread and another answers Wheat. The imagination is foreshortened when one says Bread and another answers Wheat and another answers Butter. But in the San Francisco Opera Company it seems apparent that whenever Bread is spoken the answer is always Bread.

Previously, this writer spoke about the view of dance as the matrix of the theatre. Certainly there is not a better example of the need for a choreographic approach to production on the stage as the current discussion of "Carmina Burana." One senses that despite all other shortcomings, had the choreographer been free in his group and in himself to create a meaningful compostion, "Carmina Burana" should have been a rewarding theatre experience. As it developed, however, the choreographic effort of Ghita Hager was so dismal, mundane and trite that it plunged the production into a deeper chasm. Ghita Hager may have some talent in some field; it does not exist in the dance field. With floral hoops and military groupings, Hager presented us with some of the most inept, unmeaningful and ordinary gesturing imaginable. While the rich rhythmical texture of the music swept past them, the dancers littered the stage, offering us the same static choric posturing which one disagreeably accepts from singers in sympathy for their lack of bodily imagination and ability.

We may annually forgive every breach of choreographic achievement at the opera in behalf of a choreographer who simply has neither the score nor cooperation to bring about a more accomplished end. But here, in the instance of a musical score which cries for imagination, it is impossible for us to do anything but believe that the crudeness of the opera ballet is far more the fault of the choreogra-

pher than his circumstances.

It is only unfortunate that our own San Francisco Ballet Company, with the veteran skill of choreographer Lew Christensen, could not have taken part in the 1958 opera season. Unfortunately, however, the ballet was touring Latin America at the time and was replaced by the Eugene Loring Association from Southern California.

INESITA IN SAN FRANCISCO

Most of us have grown more and more disappointed with the entire field of Spanish dance. We have been given so many poor examples at high prices. But Inesita is, without question, one of the finest performers in her field. Performing at the Dance Center to a capacity audience, this striking young woman presented an ideally coordinated solo program with vigor, contrast, vitality, charm and a kinesthetic craftsmanship leaving nothing to be desired.

With examples of traditional, folk and classical dances of Spain, Inesita demonstrated a theatrical presence entirely gripping and pleasureable. Her comedy dances were equal to her flashing flamenco work; her classic school performances as refined as her folkloric dancing was robust. Here, then, is a performer who proved that fine dancing can make a program of any idiom meaningful, pleasurable and, above all, genuine.

ANN HALPRIN AND THE MARIN DANCE WORKSHOP

In the creative life of a good many artists there has been a strange period of readjustment. This is pointedly true, it seems, of the work of Ann Halprin, long known in the Bay Area as a fine exponent of the modern dance. Miss Halprin, who retired from the Halprin-Lathrop Dance School and Company almost two years ago in order to develop a more personal vision of the dance at the dance deck built for her on her family estate in Kentfield, has ventured into an exciting and curious new area of kinesthetic investigation and experiment.

Her efforts, for now, are broadly cooperative in scope; meaning that she aims to develop her small student body's individualism, choreographic efficiency and performing finesse. Along with such lofty aims is Halprin's own efforts toward an idiom of dance which has become increasingly popular among choreographers of the

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modern dance and which has generally asumed the title of **non-objective dance.**

At the Dance Deck and with the final production of the summer series, Halprin and associates presented a program introducing and repeating a number of dances in this "new" idiom. As one has become prone to expect, the dances were ably constructed and performed with a professional polish and a refinement too often lacking in modern dance production. In essence the dances smacked considerably of Merce Cunningham and Esther Junger; developed in a particularized and highly specialized dynamic range with formal qualities directed by angularity, hyper-sustenance and crouches in off-balance attitudes. The interplay of such devices was extremely exciting and revealing. The emotional projection possessed the ambiguity which the non-objective school has generally favored — understatement is emphatic and a new narrowed concept of richness is formulated in what amounts to a ritual of bodily maneuvers.

Ann Halprin's "Daughter of the Voice"

"Duet" for Ann Halprin and A. A. Leath is an exquisite composition of deliberate attitudes. Its iced surface and Henry Moore-like masses are very rewarding and moving. Yet, curiously, the area of achievement in these dances is somewhat limited to the experimental. And, as uncomfortably indicated in a solo for Miss Halprin executed in a costume constructed of bands of elastic, too often one suspects that this idiom is really dissatisfied with the fact that human bodies must perform the dances and that an effort is being made to reconstruct humanity into the components of abstract design. This effort has always failed in the dance — in fact, it seems to me, its abandon was one of the primary issues of the revolution that brought modern dance into existence. Dancing is an interaction of a human species and the objects of that species' life are the only access it has to what we call reality (conceived or perceived). I have always taken exception to the non-objective attitude for the reason inherent in the attitude of a humanitarian. The dance by Ann Halprin in a costume of elastic bands proved again that a dancer cannot adequately become an abstract painting or sculpture. It is the root of an idea in this direction in all of the dances on the Halprin program at Marin which suggested a disastrous artistic error.

Surprisingly, the vastest achievement at the Dance Deck was a silent comedy newly created in the experimental idiom. Using improvisational vocal expressions, both sounds and words and a pure movement design with hilarious insinuations, this comedy demonstrates again that Halprin's chief achievement is in the comic field. In all her efforts, this fact has constantly re-established itself. There is probably nothing more imperfectly realized in all modern dance than comedy which is non-mimetic and

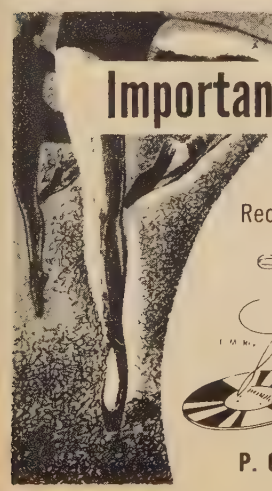
non-circumstantial. Ann Halprin, of all choreographers, has always had the most astounding ability to compose comedies in the highest style, with the purest means and with the most delightful results.

The praise of Ann Halprin's comic gift is not to defer from her achievement in tragic or, broadly, more serious frames of reference. In a simple statement and with all due respect, the fact remains, however, that Halprin's imagination is habitually working in an area of good taste and correctness which makes her experiments assume the character of polite alterations of the traditional rather than assertive expressions of an inner belief. In comedy, where her efforts to join the moribund novelty of a 60 year old graphic philosophy are subdued, where the intention seems more choreographic than graphic, an amazing achievement is realized. The trite and obvious mime of the major modern dancers is set aside and the acute dynamic imagination of Charles Chaplin comes to light in a pure dance form which, this writer is assured, has never been witnessed in such perfection previously.

An uncomfortable comparison appears essential at this point. Charles

'Mind if I cut in?'

Weidman has long held title as the comic mask of the theatre of the modern dance. In his recent performances at the Dance Center in San Francisco one could certainly appreciate his position in the history of his field and for his development of "kinesthetic pantomime." And one certainly does not venture to criticize him for not achieving what he has not intended to achieve. At the same time, one appreciates why the public readily responds to Weidman's ef-



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forts and why the textual clarity of the pieces is so important to Weidman. Weidman creates dance-plays which are amusing essentially for their plot and circumstances and partly for their idiom of movement.

This circumstance is true of every dance comedy I have witnessed. The exception is the comedy, particularly the new comedy, of Ann Halprin. It is a dance which is comical and not comedy which is danced. That difference is enough to make Ann Halprin one of our major choreographers. It seems to me, that in her comedy she achieves something without the hesitation which, in her serious work, appears while she labors as a servant of public taste. If her serious work displays the qualities of the "well-made dance" her comedies possess the vitality of totally composed works of art.

One can only hope that all of us, including Ann Halprin, can eventually gain the ability to understand the seriousness of things which are not serious.

the "SECRET" of

BEAUTY

(Off-Beat, Self-Improvement)

"Beauty," goes an old Spanish proverb, "is the compliment a wise woman pays the man she loves." Which is another way of saying that a woman determined to look lovely **can**—if she'll only take the trouble to learn how.

While Loretta Young, star of the popular Loretta Young Show on NBC-TV, has been endowed with as much beauty as any one woman has a right to have, it is her contention that every woman can be lovely to look at and charming to know.

LORETTA YOUNG—"The secret of beauty," says Loretta Young, star of NBC-TV's The Loretta Young Show, "is hard work."

"The important things," says Loretta, "is to be willing to work a little at it."

Miss Young, whose hundreds of roles have required her to look like everyone from a Chinese peasant to a chic lady lawyer, has mastered just about every beauty trick in the book. To help you look your best, she graciously shares some of them with you herewith. For the sake of convenience they are arranged by category.

HAIR

"It may be something of a chestnut to call the hair a woman's 'crowning glory,' says Loretta, "but it's as true today as it was a thousand years ago. There is no better clue to a woman's femininity and vitality.

If you 'can't do a thing' with your hair, Loretta advises this simple exercise: Bend over and brush your scalp and hair from back to front until you feel your scalp tingling. Then fingertip masage your scalp. It's a sure hair tamer.

Girls with round faces should never go in for very short haircuts. Rather,

they need enough hair on top to add height with waves and curls. They should also allow for enough hair to fall down below their ear lobes, thus creating the illusion of an oval face.

A long face looks best when framed in hair. So allow for enough hair to curl or dip over the side of your forehead and at the side to "widen" your face — plus enough to fall below your jawline.

If you wear your hair swept away from your ears and neck, extend your makeup behind your ears and blend it down over your neckline. The face, ears and neck all should be one lovely color.

EYES

"Shakespeare called them 'those windows of the soul'," Loretta points out. "As such, they demand particular attention."

Wrinkles in the corners of eyes do not come from age, but from skin dryness. Don't neglect nightly — or daily — lubrication with a good eye cream. Never massage that delicate area; rather, pat cream lightly around the outside corners of eyes, on eyelids, under eyes.

When applying eyelash makeup, use warm water. The warmth of the water causes the makeup to go on more smoothly and lastingly than when cold water is used.

If you wear glasses, avoid big bangs; instead, sweep hair to one side, revealing your brow. Eyeglass lenses magnify your features; therefore, avoid bright eye shadows and wear brown or gray instead.

(Side tip: By applying a drop of dark blue, brown or gray eye shadow along each side of your nose, you can make it appear narrower. But be sure to blend the eye shadow to avoid a spotty look.)

If circles under the eyes are your problem, add blue eye shadow on and around your lids, taking care to blend the shade. And get more sleep!

COMPLEXION

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will again be making his entrance. Some combat tactics: Lower the thermostat to 68° F. or less. Place a humidifier — or a basin of water — in any heated room.

To minimize a vaccination scar, use a pastel cream rouge. Rouge brings up the red pigment that's been lost, blends scar tissue to a pale pink. Next, apply a cake makeup of a shade that matches your skin and blend around scar.

THROAT

"This vital area," says Loretta, "is too often neglected by women who will gladly spend hours on their faces. Yet, the throat is every bit as important to a younthful appearance."

First, Loretta suggests, cleanse your neck as often as your face — and with the same enthusiasm. Stimulate by applying skin freshener or astringent. Use skin freshener for dry skin and astringent for oily skin.

Whatever you do — read, walk, write, drive, talk — hold your head up and unfold the creases of your neck. By doing this, you'll not only increase neck beauty — you'll add grace to everything you do.

Exercise. Stretch and pull the muscles and cords of your neck by pointing your chin from a straight-forward position up to the sky and returning to a straight-forward position again. Stretch it in all directions in a rotating movement from left to right, then rest. Reverse the movement and rest again. Repeat until neck muscles begin to feel tired. Increase the exercises daily until you can do it for five minutes. Level off there.

FRAME OF MIND

"A woman should always be aware of her femininity," concludes Miss Young. "That doesn't mean she can't work or play hard. It simply means that she should never forget she is dainty and desirable. Beauty, like health, often depends on a person's frame of mind.

"I think that that is what beauty primarily is — the knowledge that you were **meant** to be beautiful."

S. Hurok, genial impresario of dancers and dance companies, has just been granted the Eighth Annual Capezio Dance Award for his lifetime contribution to the progress of the dance in America.

S. Hurok Receives Capezio Dance Award

Mr. S. Hurok, known to dancers and dance companies since Pavlova, has just been named the recipient of the eighth annual Capezio Dance Award, the "Oscar" in the dance field.

The judging committee cites him for his service to dance as America's foremost impresario, who has transformed the term 'S. Hurok presents' from a mere statement of management to a promise of adventure with the best in the performing arts and who has, through his presentations of all forms of dance, both resident and imported, aided immeasurably in building for America a vast and increasingly knowledgeable dance public."

In his four decades as an impresario, Mr. Hurok's list of dance attractions reads like a Who's Who of the Dance, from Ballet Russe to Zorina, including such names as Isadora Duncan, Mary Wigman, Markova, Danilova, Toumanova, Uday Shan-kar, Katherine Dunham and the Sadler's Wells Ballet — all of whom he helped to fame in this country.

Mr. Hurok climaxes a lifetime of developing and presenting dance events with his current 'International Festival," that offers seven major attractions in the dance and the theatre.

This festival is featuring more than 500 artists in seven months, and in the spring Mr. Hurok will bring the famous Bolshoi Ballet to America for the first time. His touring productions reach across the whole nation. On this date, his Ballet Español Roberto Iglesias can be seen in South Dakota, the Scots Guards are in Montreal and Chicago is viewing the "Old Vic" Company. →

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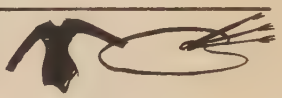

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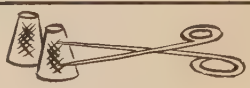

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TRY, TRY AGAIN
by
LYN DELLIS

At dancing I'm not very clever
Tho I've tried many times, goodness knows
My only accomplishment thus far
— I stay off my partner's toes.

MERRY CHRISTMAS
and
a
HAPPY NEW YEAR

to
all of you
from
all of us
at
DANCE DIGEST

The Capezio Dance Award was established in 1951 as a public service for the purpose of contributing to public awareness of the progress of the dance in the United States. It is a memorial to Salvatore Capezio, the dancer's cobbler who opened a small shop near the Metropolitan Opera House in 1887. This shop became the meeting place for artists who now have their place in history.

Former award winners are not necessarily performers, although dancers Alexandra Danilova, Ted Shawn and Doris Humphrey have ben honored. Just as important are those who contribute to the dance world behind the scenes, such as critic and composer Louis Horst, dance curator Genevieve Oswald, and builders of the ballet Lincoln Kirstein and Zachary Solov, named in other years.

The Award Committee consists of Mr. Anatole Chujoy, Editor and Critic, Dance News and Dance Encyclopedia; Miss Emily Coleman, Editor and Critic, Newsweek and Theatre Arts; Miss Martha Hill, Director of the Dance Department, Juilliard School of Music; Mr. Walter Terry, Editor and Critic, New York Herald Tribune.

A luncheon honoring Mr. Hurok and presenting him with the $1,000 Capezio Dance Award will be held at a date to be announced.

Beryozka Dance Co. From Moscow Opens at Broadway Theatre

The Beryozka Russian Dance Company from Moscow opened its first American engagement November 4 at the Broadway Theatre. Presented by S. Hurok, the troupe of 55, which features women dancers, is here under the exchange agreement between the U. S. and the Soviet Union.

The Company, celebrating its tenth anniversary, is directed by Nadezhda Nadezhdina who founded the group. The majority of the dancers were trained at the Bolshoi Ballet school. The soloists include Jella Agafonova, Julia Gravekina, Mira Koltsova, Lyubov Ostrovskaya, Lyudmila Pavlova, Irma Pomchalova, Nina Riabova, Klavdia Romanova, Valentina Suvorova and Nina Vasilieva.

The costumes were designed by Lyubov Silich and A. P. Komosov directs a group of instrumentalists which includes accordions and balalaikas. The featured instrumentalists are Yevgeni Kuznetsov,

Pyotr Galkin, Vladimir Kornev, Gennady Lvov and Vladimir Safonov.

When the company was formed in 1948 it was as a result of a folk festival held in Moscow. A group from Kalinin won the final round at the Bolshoi Theatre with a performance of a women's reel called "Beryozka." The Company acquired the name "Beryozka" and has since performed with tremendous success in some 20 countries.

The "Beryozka" reel opens the program. It is followed by two Russian dances, "The Gate" and "Troika," an old Russian round, "The Chain" and "Po Plashke," a Siberian square dance. Other numbers include "Girls Lyrical Dance," "The Beryozka Waltz" and two choreographic scenes, "Farewell to Carnival" and "Harvest Festival."

The Company will play 7 performances a week at the Broadway from Monday through Saturday at 8:30.

Its New York engagement will be followed by a national tour which will include Washington, Philadelphia, Detroit, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Chicago.

The complete program follows:

1. "Beryozka" (The Birch Tree) — Russian women's round.
2. "The Gate" — Russian dance.
3. "Troika" — Russian dance.
4. "The Chain" — Old Russian round.
5. "Po Plaske" — Siberian square dance.
6. "Girls' Lyrical Dance."
7. "Prokhodka" — Russian dance.
8. "Handkerchief Dance"
9. "Farewell to Carnival"—choreographic scene.

Intermission

1. "Beryozka Waltz"—An old Russian waltz.
2. "At the Well" — choreographic sketch.
3. "The Spinning Wheel Dance" — Russian women's round.
4. "The Girl Friends" — Polka.
5. "Lebedushka" (The Little Swan)
6. "Comic Polka".
7. "Sudarushka"—Russian round.
8. "Harvest Festival" — choreographic scene.

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San Francisco Ballet

The San Francisco Ballet, just back from a triumphant tour of 15 South and Central American countries, will open its 1958 winter season with two performances of its newest and most lavish production, "Beauty and the Beast," on Friday and Saturday, December 19 and 20.

"Beauty and the Beast," which was hailed by the critics when it was first presented this spring, will be given at the War Memorial Opera House on December 19 at 8:30 p.m. and on December 20 at 2:30 p.m.

Jocelyn Vollmar and Richard Carter will dance the title roles.

The full-length version of Tschaikovsky's "nutcracker", now a San Francisco Christmas tradition, will be presented for the 13th straight year, in three performances at the Opera House and one in Palo Alto.

This year, for the first time, a special Christmas Eve matinee of "Nutcracker" will be presented at 11:00 a.m., December 24, at the Opera House. Other performances will be on December 21 at 2:30 p.m.; December 22 at 2:30 p.m. On December 23 "Nutcracker" will be presented in the Stanford Memorial Auditorium at 2:30 p.m.

FRED ASTAIRE DANCE STUDIOS ELECT OFFICERS: Fred Astaire (center) world-famous dance, stage, screen and TV star, is chairman of the board of the Fred Astaire Dance Studios Corporation with a coast-to-coast chain of 100 studios. Charles L. Casanave, Jr. (left) is new president and Chester F. Casanave (right) is executive vice-president and treasurer. Executive headquarters are in New York City.

LONDON FOOTNOTES

by

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NEW MORRICE BALLET PREMIERE

The new Norman Marrice ballet for Rambert, to Dohnanyi music and with costumes and decor by Ralph Koltai, was given its premiere at Sadler's Wells, London, this week.

It is reminiscent of several 'street game' ballets in the New York City Ballet repertoire and, very slightly, of Helpman's MIRACLE IN THE GORBALS.

But Morrice's TWO BROTHERS is a far, far better work. A triangle story involving The Girl (Gillian Martlew) and Young Man (John Chesworth) with His Brother (danced by Morrice himself, it is a strong, realistic treatment told in simple terms.

Morrice plays the brother as an outsider, rebuffed by the street group until eventually swerving attention upon himself when he murders the 'accepted' brother's girl. The choreography for this sensitive role was well directed, the girl's work also exploiting a kind of splay-legged maternal pity theme which I found interestingly novel.

A good ballet for the Rambert group, and a worthwhile effort by Morrice. I hope we see more, soon.

During this same evening Milorad Miskovitch bravely returned to London with his somewhat eunuch-like Faune in Nijinski's L'APRES-MIDI D'UN FAUNE.

You are tired of being told this ballet shocked Paris years ago with its nude faune, its leggy nymphs and the mimed sex act at its close. Perhaps once it did shock. I find it a pitiful little ballet full of adolescent trappings of Greek symbolism which does no service to Nijinski's memory.

Why Miskovitch keeps producing it, who knows?

Lucette Aldous came over as a young, beautiful, pert Swanhilda in a seg-

ment of COPPELIA used by Rambert to end the evening.

● Leonide Massine . . . Serge Golovine . . . Rosella Hightower . . . Jacqueline Moreau . . . Nina Vyroubova . . . the Ballet de Marquis de Cuevas may have a poor corps, little decor and not much artistic cohesion . . . but it has dancers aplenty.

Returning to London, de Cuevas brings with him no flight of new repertoire but it's a joy to see Hightower again, see Vyroubova in good form, Moreau still better. And Daphne Dale again — and Golovine the superb. To have Massine back again after fifteen years and in the same theatre where he mounted GAITE PARISIENNE for Mona Inglesby and the International.

Massine by now must have carbonned GAITE for half a thousand companies. It was never more than a frothy, inconsequential ballet, but the huge Coliseum firstnight cheered for Massine's still immaculate Peruvian. Certainly it was a pleasure to have Massine dancing again.

Lifar's duel-causing ballet, NOIR ET BLANC, seemed on first sight to have no possible grounds upon which to cause duels. A somewhat Balanchinish work, it is starkly noir et blanc and, inside its limits, an excellent short work. Golovine seems younger, smaller, lighter, more aerially-poised than ever before. Dale, Moreau, Vyroubova, Hightower all danced in this Lifar ballet to Edouard Lalo Score.

The other two items on premiere were the dependable PAS DE TROIS CLASSIQUE, a tourdeforce for Golovine/Hightower/Vyroubova, and the Balanchine NIGHT SHADOW a plot ballet with a court, romantic poet, coquette . . . and a sleepwalker. As ever, Vyroubova's somnambulist was beautifully unaware, Dale danced la Coquette and Golovine essayed the Poet.

This year George de Cuevas can look back on nearly $6,000,000 lost in his 11-years-old ballet company. It could have been spent with more discipline . . . but not on better people. And the de Cuevas ballet brings with it an excitement, an atmosphere, perhaps too uncommercial — but welcome, welcome.

● NEXT into the Coliseum comes Antonio with his new version of LE TRICORNE, something called PAS DE QUATRE (again, not an unknown title!), ZAPATEADO (this is a ballet?) and a few more. I look forward to Antonio . . . with bitter memories I don't look forward with the same fervour to his "ballets."

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Bullheaded

by
Lyn Dellis

When I find a good place on the
dance floor
From that spot I refuse to
swerve.
I call it tenacity;
My partner calls it nerve.

● Bursting upon London this week: THE TALK OF THE TOWN. A 700-seater theatre restaurant with an average top of $15 a head, this is the rebuilt Hippodrome theatre into which Bernard Delfont and Charles Forte have poured half a million dollars. Lavish, gay, fabulously decorated, a how-do-they-beat-this costuming and a two-band floorshow. . . THE TALK OF THE TOWN gives London a tourist bait with value to the dollar.

● For my ballet readers, there are tights (gold lame, naturally). For ballroom owners, a skit on the typical ballroom exhibition dancer (cruelly untrue, naturally). For just visitors to London, an all-inclusive night out (being Delfont its top entertainment, naturally).

And it really is the talk of the town . . .

The Gentle Art of CONVERSATION

(Off-Beat, Self-Improvement)

Conversation is the champagne of life. And, like champagne, it should sparkle. Yet many people, confronted with the task of holding up their end of a tête-à-tête, often wind up with something much more akin to warm beer.

It needn't be like that all.

"The man who converseth well," said Cato the Elder, "may change his world." It's true. Your conversation can make friends, help you get ahead on the job, bring your family closer together. But you have to be willing to make that extra effort. Once willing, nothing can stop you, for on your side you have a battery of psychologists, public speakers — even engineers — who are willing to share their know-how with you. Take heed of what they say and you can't miss mas-

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tering the gentle art of conversation.

Here, divested of their technical jargon, are tips that the experts would pass along if they could sit and chat with you.

Make yourself interesting. When you talk, do the eyes of your audience take a glazed expression? Do people look wildly about for an exit? If so, examine the content of your conversation. Is it simply a rehash of old anecdotes and cliches that they have heard before? Could be. There is nothing more boring, you know, than a repeat performance. To avoid that feeling of talking to deaf ears, make a real effort to be a more exciting person to be near.

One way to do this is to read with a purpose. As you go through a book or magazine, be aware of what phases or words hit you particularly and stop to examine why they produce the effect they do. Try saying the same thing in another way and discover for yourself why that combination of words was so good. This will develop a habit of controlling your own speech, editing yourself as you go along and, as this habit develops, it will become an automatic control on which you will be able to rely, thus adding to your confidence in your use of language.

But don't just study the words. Keep up with the world around you. Store conversational items in your mind. Watch the papers for unusually interesting items which you can bring into your conversation.

The more you broaden your own interests, the more you will be able to adjust yourself to talking to different kinds of people.

Bring up subjects on which the other fellow is an expert. Who does every person look for first in a group photograph? Himself, of course! Each of us is intensely interested in himself and if you can steer the conversation now and then to a topic on which someone else is an authority, your stock as a talker will skyrocket. It not only gives him a chance to speak on "solid ground"; it immediately makes you "a man after his own heart."

Never, but never, look for an argument. More good conversations — and friendships — have shattered on the rocks of contention than on anything else. Even if you're sure the other fellow is wrong, sidestep controversy. Nobody wins an argument and it's no good for the digestion. If you're with anyone less than a soulmate, it's wise to skirt such topics as religion and politics, too. And finally, as fascinating as it may be, chatter about sex may be unfavorably received by at least one member of your audience, perhaps more.

Don't raise your voice needlessly. A whisper can pack as big a wallop as a shout — sometimes more so. Don't believe it? Try yelling, "I love you." Then whisper it. A modulated voice is relaxing, conducive to conversation.

Learn the value of atmosphere. What you say — and how you say it — take on a lot more meaning in the right setting. If you've ever eaten dinner by candlelight, you know how soft illumination has a way of making you talk better, your audience more attentive. Available now are light controls for your home that permit you to dim or brighten lights at will. Introduced about three years ago, these Luxtrol light controls, with a capacity of 360 watts, were limited in application. New Luxtrol light controls handle up to 1800 watts — yet are small enough to be installed in an ordinary four-inch stud wall. They take the place of ordinary on-and-off switches and because a simple dial controls light brightness, they're not only atmospheric, they're economical, too. An electrical contractor can give you the details.

Don't talk about yourself. That is, to the exclusion of everyone and everything else. Unless you're a big

'Isn't it heavenly dancing cheek to cheek?'

Dear Editor:

Please send me one copy of Dancing Star, March, 1953. I would like to read the article, "Confessions of a Contortionist."

I collect pictures of contortionists and also practice, but only as an amateur. I wish I could have seen some of the old-time vaudeville acts. Contortionism was very popular in those days. If you know of anyone who is interested in this subject, I would appreciate their name and address.

Sincerely,
P. M. RIDDLE
New York City

game hunter or Bridgette Bardot, you may be somewhat annoyed to discover that your audience is not waiting with bated breath for a detailed account of what you did yesterday. They may well be fascinated by what you think or know; but soft pedal the personal details.

Master the art of listening. This old rule is as valid as the day it was minted. Everybody has a streak of the "ham" in him. Give him half a chance to express it and you'll have a brand new friend. After all, conversation is a two-way street. When it isn't, it ceases to be conversation and dwindles to a monolog.

Just half a dozen rules. But they can change your world. And conversation is so much less expensive than champagne.

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Why such a wide audience for an art that once was considered longhair? Chiefly because of some dazzling dancers, members of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo.

For the past 20 years, America's best-known ballet company has danced its way across the United States and Canada, performing in big cities and whistle-stops alike, and making buffs out of people who previously hadn't known a pirouette from a pinwheel. Through the years, the services of such bigtime ballerinas as Alexandra Danilova, Alicia Markova and Maria Tallchief helped spread the company's fame.

Loading two buses and two trucks wtih personnel and props, the troupe visits more than 100 cities in a typical season, covers well over 20,000 miles, and plays before longhairs and crewcuts alike — with a sprinkling of Presley pompadours spotted in the balconies.

It was not always thus. During its first couple of seasons, the company had to contend with resounding artistic successes — and equally thunderous financial failures. But the few who bought tickets spread the word that good ballet is exciting — and that the excitement it arouses can be generated by no other type of theater. (Ballet, of course **is** theater — the dance dramatization of a story or a mood.)

Part of ballet's appeal is the primitive fascination that dance — any form of dance — holds for us. This reliable spellbinder is man's oldest art —the compulsion to dance took hold of our ancestors long before they had songs to sing, or music to step to. The Bible records that King David once did a dance of thanksgiving, and that the women of Israel danced to honor God after their safe passage across the Red Sea. In all lands, dance is still one of the most potent and popular means of expressing emotion.

But ballet is like no other dance. Watch the dancers move, and you'll see what we mean. They lift themselves onto their toes or clear off the ground, meanwhile stretching their bodies in long, graceful lines. Their faces are serene, their arms languid as they leap through the air, giving the impression of effortless ease. This combination of precision and power, serenity and spectacular motion, is what makes ballet exciting to watch. Spectators get the same thrill from its leaps and jumps as they do from the impossibly high note that the soprano reaches for and touches, or from the ball that sails between the crossbars as the result of a well-placed toe. Engineers, accountants, and other mathematically minded folk are often ballet fans; they like the balance and exactness with which ballet is plannned and executed.

These elegant athletics were part of the ballet from its very beginning. Many of the steps we see today are taken from the fencing routine of the French nobles at the court of Louis XIV. These blue-blooded swordsmen were the first ballet dancers, and they danced the way they dueled — deftly and efficiently, balancing themselves on the turned-out feet that are still the basic ballet stance. Later, acrobats were recruited as dance teachers added the soaring leaps which also

(continued on page 503)

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are basic to ballet. Famous ballerinas devised steps which were added to the repertoire. Much of the showmanship and the dazzlingly complex footwork were contributed by the dance masters of Czarist Russia.

The "Russe" in the title of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo refers to

(continued from page 501)

dance technique, not nationality. Only one of the dancers was born in Russia. The rest hail from all over the globe — as cosmopolitan as ballet itself has become.

An excellent example to anyone who seeks solid achievement in his work, a dancer's first, last and middle name is Practice — and the most skilful artists invariably are the ones whose stamina enables them to practice longest. The goal: the dancer's absolute control over his instrument, which is his own body. The ballerina and her partner need the balance of tightrope walkers, the precision of fine violinists, the devotion of artists and the satmina of athletes. To earn these superlatives, the troupe practices before every rehearsal and every performance.

Science helps. To help Ballet Russe dancers perfect their art while at the barre or in a dancing ensemble, engineers of Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company recently porduced twin-ground mirrors which give as faithful an image in color, form and line, as any mirror ever made.

Much mirror practice and little leisure — is the long and difficult game worth the brief candle of a dancing career? Few dancers get rich, for even the fabulously popular Ballet Russe just about breaks even. (Profits must be used to stage ballets, maintain and repair costumes. Toe-shoes, to cite one item, cost over $8.00 and last, with luck, for a week.)

But even fewer ballet dancers leave the field. Seems that it gets into your blood, this chance to be airborne and to lift the audience right up with you.

Image perfect reflections of the ballet, "Variations Classiques" in line, form, color and beauty in the new High Fidelity mirrored wall of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo.

(Lower): Future "prima ballerinas" check their posture in new mirrors on walls of Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo New York studio. Perfect images of line, form, color and beauty result as Ballerina Irina Borowska puts the diminutive dancers through their paces.

the DANCE in NEW YORK

a series of reviews

edited by W. H. STEPHAN

JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE FESTIVAL *1958 Season*

For the 26th year Ted Shawn has presented the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival. Again the formula ran for the most part one modern, one ballet, and one ethnic group per program for the nine week season.

There were Slavenska and Eglevsky, Ram Gopal, and Lotte Goslar, as well as the Donald Sadler Company and Geoffrey Holder. The Ximinez-Vargas Spanish Ballet Conmpany and the Atlantic Civic Ballet got one week each. The first program of the season that we attended was probably the most disastrous. The headliners were Nina Novak and George Zorich, with Irinia Kovalska and Edmund Novak. The program left one feeling rather like it was somewhere around 1930 instead of 1958.

On the same program was Myra Kinch and Company with works old and new. Three familiar works were shown: "The Angels of Puno," the First Episode of "The Flowering Branch," and "Giselle's Revenge." Unfortunately, the latter number had been changed from the original and was no longer the uproariously funny satire. Jean Cebron, guest artist, was sadly miscast. He performed the work quite seriously, not at all "in the manner of Charles Addams."

One of Miss Kinch's new works was the Second Episode of "The Flowering Branch." This consisted of three sections of Harvest Dances and an Epilogue. They were pleasant, but stretched the choreographic point a bit. "Beautiful Dreamer," a tribute to Stephen Foster, was the most satisfying of the modern works. Throughout the various sections an otherworldly quality was maintained as the dancers dreamily brought to life Stephen Foster characters.

On the classical ballet side Irina Kovalska (sister-in-law to Nina Novak) opened the program dancing "Dawn," choreographed b Edmund Novak (brother to Nina and espoused to Irina). Sister Irina, who is slightly overweight, was seen viewing the dawn, picking flowers, dipping her hand into a brook, and playing peek-a-boo with the audience behind a basket of flowers she carried. The choreography was outmoded romanticism; the dancing coy and unsophisticated. This was true of "The Girl and The Birds," choreographed by brother Edmund for Sister Nina. Though Miss Novak chased, caught and coddled birds, it was less offensive than "Dawn" because of a more sophisticated style of interpretation.

The "Don Quixote Pas de Deux" was shakily performed by Miss Novak and George Zorich.

In a revival of "L'Apres Midi d'un Faun" Mr. Zorich is handsome, but it seems rather unnecessary after all these years.

"Paganini" was choreographed by S. Miszczyk and won the Medal and Diploma at the International Festival of Dance, Warsaw, July, 1955. It only confused the audience. Brother Edmund performed it in utter seriousness and it was so like "Giselle's Revenge" that few knew when to laugh. In the hands of Mata and Hari it would have brought the house down.

Then other fortunate people saw Daniel Nagrin and a week later Violette Verdy and Scott Douglass. Our second venture gave us Barbara Fallis with Royes Fernandez, Myra Kinch and Company, and the Kandyan Dancers from Ceylon. Only Miss Fallis and Mr. Fernandez made this worth the trip. They did the World Premiere of a flashy little pas de deux by Anatole Vilzak. Pleasant. Their second number was billed as follows:

"Peasant" Pas de Deux from "Giselle" (Interpolated, Act I) Choreography: Coralli, arranged by Jules Joseph Perrott .Music: Burgmuller."

What this all means is this: it is a Pas de Deux from the first act of Giselle that is very rarely seen in this country. When Giselle gets the vapors after dancing for the Duke she asks two of her peasant friends to entertain. This divertissement and an

added Fugue for the Willis in Act II add about 20 minutes to the production. Mr. Fernandez learned this variation from Mary Skeaping of the Royal Swedish Ballet.

The Dancers of Ceylon (three men) present six numbers. After the first one you got the idea. Pantomime replaced the Mudras of the Hindus and though it was more literal it is not nearly so interesting. We were told that one of their greatest dancers is now in his nineties.

Mr. Shawn is on his way to Europe now to arrange for the Ballet Rambert for next season. We wish him better than this last season.

— Claire Williams
— W. H. Stephan

JEROME ROBBINS' BALLETS: USA — *Alvin Theatre*

During a season when both Ballet Theatre and The City Center Ballet were playing, Jerome Robbins' **Ballets: USA** not only managed to attract capacity houses but added a three-week extension to its scheduled run. The company was originally formed for "The Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, Italy, this past summer. With a stop over for peforrmances at the Brussell's World's Fair the troupe returned home for a September season at the Alvin Theatre. There they have garnered accolades from the press, nightly ovations from the audiences and unqualified raves from the jazz enthusiasts.

The company as a whole performs with tremendous, youthful energy which is always tempered with great technical security. It is a handsome company, well chosen to exemplify American energetic youth. All are given equal program billing and without exception they are fine performers, specially hand picked to the Robbins' qualifications; but as is always the case certain individuals emerge with that distinctive flair which marks them as extra-special. Patricia Dunn, Wilma Curley and Jay Norman fall into this category.

A charming curtain raiser, **3 x 3**, got the proceedings underway. This was a commedia group for three couples and three onstage musicians. It had charm and wit which smacked much more of Americans playing at Commedia del Arte than any attempt at the real McCoy. The wonderful thing about this slight but pleasant piece was that all the witticisms were stated through dance and true choreographic invention rather than pantomimic gestures or facial devices. The performing couples were Joan Van Orden with Tom Abbot, Erin Martin with Gene Gavin, and Beryl Towbin and James Moore.

The overwhelming success of the production in every sense was **N. Y. Export op. Jazz.** Here Mr. Robbins has brought the diverse elements of today's dance rhythms and qualities into a formalized structure where they stand as an impressive ballet without aid of narrative framework. Bits of this kind of work have been seen in the former Robbins ballets and Broadway shows from the early days of **Fancy Free** to the current production of **West Side Story,** but here it seems he has crystallized his whole approach to jazz into an abstract ballet — and it is a first rate work. The company dances this specialized style with a polish that evidently stems from a complete undertsanding and a close native instinct for such material. A section of the work entitled "Statics" was given a brilliant performance by Patricia Dunn and Jay Norman. "Passage for Two" was a choreographic high point which seemed to sum up all the "cool" romantic meetings of the beat generation. The closing movement, "Theme and Variations and Fugue" was a beautifully structured section and demonstrated how well classic compositional forms lend themselves to jazz materials. This is indeed a "real gone" ballet but gone in that direction which a master craftsman carries materials that are dear to his heart.

The Afternoon of a Faun, formerly in the repertory of the City Center Ballet, was given a competent performance by Wilma Curley and Jay Norman. The work holds even in the hands of dancers who are not particularly well typed for these roles. Unfortunately we keep remembering Tanaquill LeClerc and Francisco Moncion doing the same roles with a far deeper understanding.

The program comes to a rolicking close with **The Concert,** subtitled **The Perils of Everybody.** Everything and everybody was spoofed — Chopin's music, the eccentricities of concert goers and even the mental extensions or flights of fancy of those attending concerts. Maria Karnilova had a field day playing the role of the mad ballerina. Todd Bollender gave a wonderful characterization of the unwilling husband to the ardent concert-going wife. Betty Walberg not only played the piano onstage but participated in the balletic madness of **The Concert.** The satire of the entire proceedings was lavishly overlaid with real belly laughs — a great time was had by all — onstage and off.

— Bill Hooks.

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THE NEW YORK CITY BALLET FALL SEASON — 1958

New York City Center

The New York City Ballet began its Tenth Anniversary Season wtih many of its top rung performers absent from the company for one reason or another. Maria Tallchief was on leave of absence for maternity reasons. Due to a foot injury Diana Adams could not perform during the entire run. Melissa Hayden was forced to curtail her scheduled performaces because of a slight injury, but did appear throughout the engagement. However, the absence of these stalwarts from the company roster did not in the least lower the quality of the repertory.

The most notable feature of the Tenth Anniversary Season was indeed the splendid quality of the New York City Ballet corps and the magnificent promise shown by so many of the younger members when they were called upon for replacement roles. The company has been solidly built and thoroughly grounded in the repertory so that unscheduled personnel changes on the program moved with ease and even polish.

Patricia Wilde was called upon for additional roles during the season which she might not have danced with all the regular ballerinas present. She proved herself not only the popular athletic dancer which she has always been but demonstrated new facets of sublety and warmth heretofore unseen. Melissa Haden danced everything from Odette, the Swan Queen, to the modern and witty "Bransley Gay" in **Agon.** She grows more and more as a finely characterized artist and as a popular favorite with the audience.

In the male department Andre Eglevsky was his usual **danseur noble** self — full of gallant support and technical tricks of the trade which invariably bring bravos from the galleries. The spirited Jacques d'Amboise and the moody Francisco Moncion added further luster to the season. Jonathan Watts grows more outstanding with each season. He seems marked with that rare distinction of **danseur noble** which seems almost non-existent among the current crop of young dancers. Edward Villella also gained attention through his highly animated and energetic performance. A little grooming and polishing should produce something exciting in this dancer.

Perhaps the most exciting factor of the season was the performance and emergence of Allegra Kent. This young dancer whose whole career has been with the New York City Ballet, carried away most of the anniversary honors. She is pretty of face, truly classic in body line and impeccably trained. Add to this a quiet dignity and maturity far exceeding her years and you have the makings of a first ballerina. Her Swan Queen was not only brilliantly danced but given a fine dramatic interpretation. There is an elegant plasticity about her body line that is rarely seen. The **pas de deux** from **Agon** which she dances with Arthur Mitchell, was perhaps the peak performance of the entire season.

The engagement had no novelties of any importance, only a **pas de deux, Waltz Scherzo** by Balanchine. Rather, it played a full and varied run from the impressive existing repertory. No review of the season would be complete without some men-

tion of the new Ballet Mistress, Janet Reed. The fine performance of the **corps de ballet** and the smoothness of the substitutions are a great credit to her.

— Bill Hooks.

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE
SEPT. 15 - OCT. 4, 1958 *Metropolitan Opera House*

The Fall season of the American Ballet Theatre at the Met brought us an interesting array of new works if not all first rate.

The first of these was Herbert Ross' "Concerto" to Tchaikovsky's **Violin Concert in D.** Choreographically inventive, it goes against the music so badly we must call it a miss. "Pacan," another Ross opus to Chausson's **Concerto for Violin, Piano and Strings,** rates the same criticism.

His third try, "Tristam," is really a sick work. To Wagner's **Liebestod,** two tubercular sanatorium patients make love. All these works bespeak a great potential for Mr. Ross; it's just that these numbers didn't jell.

Kenneth MacMillan again presented his "Journey," originally done for a workshop program. Nora Kaye and twelve men give us Death to Music by Bartok. It was quite energetic but dull.

Anton Dolin's "Variations for Four" was merely an advanced class and no choreography. Dancers were Erik Bruhn, Scott Dougles, Reyes Fernandez and John Kriza.

On the credit side we were left with Markova's "Giselle," the "Pas de Quatre" and "Miss Julie." The first two are always a hit and fortunately "Miss Julie," in its own way, can join them. Violette Verdy and Erik Bruhn did an excellent job with Strindberg's high-born lady and her butler. This number was originally choreographed by Birgit Cullberg for the Royal Swedish Ballet. We are glad to have it on this side of the ocean.

By and large, Ballet Theatre had a highly successful season.

— C. T. Egmont.

Dancers of Ceylon — W. H. Stephan

Myra Kinch and Gunnar Spencer in Miss Kinch's "Giselle's Revenge."
— W. H. Stephan

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COOPER UNION DANCE SERIES
DANIEL NEGRIN — KATHERINE LITZ
MARY ANTHONY AND COMPANY

October 10, 1958
Ted Shawn, David Vaughn
Guest Speakers

The Cooper Union Fall dance series, under the direction of Shirley Broughton, was launched with a very high calibre program. The Great Hall was filled to capacity and the reception was enthusiastic.

Daniel Negrin carried the greater part of the program, and with distinction. His dancing has always been clean, precise and forthright in intent. Perhaps this was why he could so easily carry along with him the polyglot audience which Cooper Union attracts. Most of his performance was from his long established repertory — **Man Dancing, Strange Hero,** and **Man of Action.** They were given the kind of highly polished performance which comes only with long and loving acquaintance with these dances. **Bounce Boy,** newer but just as well performed, seemed to lack the real character insight which was so strong in his other dance portraits.

Katherine Litz danced two of her best works on this occasion. **The Story of Love from Fear to Flight,** although it contained much excess yardage, showed her in a favorable lyric dance style, which was pleasant if not profound. Her great forte, self-contained comedy, was ably demonstrated in the very funny **Glyph.** This marvelous piece of nonsense with a jersey tube brought the house down.

A group work done by Mary Anthony rounded out the well balanced program. While **Trio,** danced by Miss Anthony, John Starkweather and Anneliss Widman, showed neither special choreographic invention nor dramatic insight into the situation presented in the dance, it did serve as a showcase for a beautiful and exciting performance by Miss Widman. Although the whole air of the work smacked of a dated "Thirtyish Era," Miss Widman rose above this frame and gave a performance which brought an ovation from the audience.

The dance recital was followed by a discussion between Ted Shawn and David Vaughan as to the future of Modern Dance. Mr. Shawn painted a rosy picture for the future, based largely on his thorough knowledge of past events. Mr. Vaughan held out little hope for the Modern Dance, but then as Mr. Shawn so succinctly put it, "Despite my years, Mr. Vaughan has obviously suffered more than I."

— Bill Hooks.

TALLEY BEATTY ***YM - YWHA***
MYRA KINCH AND COMPANY ***Kaufman Concert Hall***
DIANE AND VOL QUITZOW AND COMPANY ***October 26, 1958***

The Dance Center of the YM-YWHA under the supervision of Doris Humphrey began its new season with the artists and companies listed above. While the program revealed no particularly outstanding artist or work, it did maintain a uniformly high concert level. Much of the program has been previously reviewed in these columns, hence the emphasis will be on the performers and the novelties.

Talley Beatty opened the program with three African dances, **Dance of the Galou, Hamsin** and **Mysteries.** Each of these pieces had a highly theatrical beginning — fascinating costumes, decorative props, striking dramatic lighting, plus the excitement of two excellent drummers. Mr. Beatty moved with his usual fluid, almost feline grace — and yet he was powerful and strong. All of these wonderful elements however quickly wore thin and the choreographic weaknesses began to show. Mr. Beatty seemed to spend most of his time, after the initial impact of the exotic beginning, merely strutting back and forth along the diagonal and manipulating his props. This was certainly not the case in **Icarus,** a solo choreographed for Talley Beatty by Ernest Parham, and based on the Greek legend of Icarus, who flew too close to the sun and plummeted into the sea. Here Mr. Beatty stood stripped of the numerous trappings of his African dances and used his own body in an exciting and inventive manner which ably demonstrated his technical range and projective powers. It would indeed be a pleasure to see him explore further in this direction. **The Way Out East St. Louis Toodleoo** choreographed and danced by Mr. Beatty to a Duke Ellington recording, had a few moments of fantasy comedy. On the whole it seemed like a good idea which just kept falling short of the keen edge of comedy.

Myra Kinch and Company presented her now classic **Giselle's Revenge** and **Beautiful Dreamer,** premiered at Jacob's Pillow this summer. **Giselle's Revenge,** in the manner of Charles Addams, was given a smacking and highly irreverent performance. Here we see Miss Kinch at her best. She has rare comedy timing and a wonderful face for such shenanigans. She also seems to have a particular choreographic insight that is very special when dealing with material in this manner. However, it is quite a different story in her serious work, **Beautiful Dreamer.** The work is not only dull choreographically, but within its own frame Miss Kinch herself emerges as only a chorus dancer. She seems unable to find any unusual insight for herself or company such as she has so well provided in **Giselle's Revenge.** This is indeed a dubious tribute to Stephen Foster. Miss Kinch's well rehearsed company included Maggie Newman, Shirley Jensen, Lucile Ormay, Gunnar Spencer and Robert Gerald.

The Quitzows, Diane and Vol, came off with top honors both in that they ventured something daring and performed quite beautifully. The daring experiments included a work by Diane Quitzow entitled **Fly** and another by Vol Quitzow, **Short Story.** In each experiment journeys were made as extensions beyond the usual frame of technical dance. In **Fly,** which concerned itself with a mother, her son and the inevitable loss of the son to another woman, Miss Quitzow utilized sound tones from the dancers themselves, uttered in the throes of high passion, for a heightened extension beyond the danced movement. It was successful in part — actually too much so in spots in that it almost embarrassed the viewer with its sudden, raw violence. However, bravo — for effort and seeking and for an excellent peformance by Pat Hammack, Sally Bramlette and Vol Quitzow. The other experiment was **Short Story,** which involved a murderer, a girl and a thief. Perhaps too much was attempted in so short a time space where the dance extension were both narrative and psychological. But it was given a highly animated performance by the Quitzows and Harlan McCallum. The Quitzows did a repeat of their duet, **Shades of Eros.** They are physically handsome young people and seem just right for this golden setting dealing with eroticism and narcissism.

— Bill Hooks.

Note: Additional Reviews will appear in the January issue.

DANCE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATIONS

You are welcome to send news of Your Association to this Column

Teachers' and Students' section

DANCE MASTERS OF WISCONSIN held an Educational Program at the Adele Artinian Studio in Milwaukee, October 26. Faculty members included: Richard Verhoeven, Intermediate Tap; June Rold, Ballet Technique and Dances; and "Sayonara"—Japanese Dance; Ton Tom, Hawaiian Dance; Gus Giordano, Modern Jazz Technique and Dance, and Louis Girard, Ballroom Forum. BULLETIN NOTE: Teachers, would you enjoy being on our faculty? If so, write complete information and mail it to the Educational Director, Edna Christensen, 92 State Street, Racine, Wisconsin.

DANCE MASTERS OF OHIO met for their One-Day Convention November 2 at the Neil House in Columbus, Ohio. The faculty included Bob Audy, Tap; Virginia Garrett, Ballet; Bob Audy, Modern Jazz Routine; Virginia Garrett, Ballroom, and Joyce Flynn, Acrobatic. A reception, banquet and floor show were included in the One-Day Convention.

DANCE TEACHERS GUILD has announced the first session of its Young Choreographers' Laboratory, to take place November 28 at the Dance Notation Bureau Studio in New York City.

The Young Choreogpraphers' Laboratory was established by the Dance Teachers Guild in recognition of the need for a choreographic counseling service to stimulate greater interest and productivity of dance composition by teen-agers and to provide an opportuntiy to show their work. Dancers between the ages of 13 and 18 are invited to show their compositions to a committee of experienced choreographers and dancers for evaluation and suggestions for improvement. Teachers of students showing their work may attend the session.

Members of the Young Choreographers' Laboratory Committee are: Bonnie Bird, chairman; Rita Chazens, Eve Gentry, Els Grelinger, Andora Hodgins, Billie Kirpich, Dorothy Krooks, Bunni Mendelsohn, Lydia Weismann, Pat Wytk.

BULLETIN NOTE: At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Council of Dance Teacher Organziations held in New York City on October 26, 1958, the Associated Dancing Teachers of Southern California were unanimously elected to membership in the Council.

The National Council, which is celebrating its tenth anniversary this month, will hold its semi-annual general meeting in New York City on November 9.

DANCE MASTERS OF AMERICA, OKLAHOMA CHAPTER, held a one-day session November 9 at the Kotche Studio in Oklahoma City. Faculty included: Lez Damaroff, Acrobatic; Marcella Patterson, Tap; Phi Delta

Neal, Ballet; Kitche and Ken Winters, Ballroom, and Don Jones, Ballroom. This session in Teachers' Training included technique and terminology that teachers joining the association need to know in order to become a Certified dance teacher. A door-prize of a long-sleeve leotard was donated by the Art Teen Sports Wear Co. The second DMA State Convention will be held March 8 at the Mayo Hotel in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

ASSOCIATED DANCE TEACHERS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA held a meeting October 12 at the Statler Hotel in Los Angeles. Faculty members included: Favorite Steps and Ideas by Bob and Dorys Gollatz; Theory and Application of Ballroom Dancing, Alan Nielson; Kimble Revue, Suzanne Ootero, Ballroom, Irene Tungate and Ballroom Forum, with contributions by Katherine Sheehy, Alan Nielson, Irene Tungate, Charley Baker and Norma Carter.

DANCE MASTERS OF CALIFORNIA held its bi-monthly meeting at the Mason-Kahn Studio in San Francisco, November 2, 1958. On the faculty were Elva Eilers, Intermediate Tap; Aron Tamaroff, Ballet; Bernice Lear, Japanese Dance; Frances Park, Ballroom, and Mr. and Mrs. Neville Daniels, International Style Ballroom.

NEWSETTES . . .

Thomas & Rogers, well known dance team, recently opened at the Deauville Club in Santa Monica, California, and on October 28 they appeared on the Red Rowe TV Show. Dance Digest readers know this team through their monthly column, "Know Your Dancing," which appears each month in this magazine.

IGLESIAS BALLET ESPANOL OPENS WITH 5 NEW WORKS AT BROADWAY THEATRE

Roberto Iglesias and his Ballet Español opened a one-week stand at the Broadway Theatre October 7, presented by S. Hurok. This is the second event of the Hurok International Festival. It ran through October 12.

This marks the first Broadway engagement of the Iglesias Company, which appeared here only once before in a single performance in 1957 at Carnegie Hall, en route from South America to Europe. Its success resulted in a contract for a coast-to-coast tour with Mr. Hurok.

Five new works were presented at the Broadway Theatre. Two feature music by Isaac Albeniz. They are "Triana" with scenery by Pala and Espada, costumes by Maria Pas Jemenez and choreography by Mr. Iglesias and "Leyenda," a solo which Ana Mercedes has choreographed for herself.

The third new work is "Alborada Del Gracioso," to the Ravel score with choreography by the troupe's Ballet Master, Guillermo Keys Arenas. It is danced by Rosalia Lorca, Esperanze Galan, Carmen Aviles and Manolo Galan. It is the story of a rejected lover.

Rosario Escudero has choreographed the popular "Polo Sevillano" and in it, she is accompanied by the Flamenco singe Pepe Segundo and Guitarist Felix De Utrera.

The final number on the program is a new ballet called "El Duende" with music by Alfredo Munar-Sandoval and scenario by Alfredo Matilla. "El Duende" literally means The Goblin, but it is treated as the illusive moment of magic which transforms the pro-

Bill Starr, formerly with the Mason-Kahn Studios in San Francisco, is now with the traveling company of the "Music Man". Eighteen years of age, Bill is the nephew of Al and Larry Margolin, operators of the A & L Theatrical Company in Oakland, California.

saic into the beautiful. The choreography is the joint work of Mr. Iglesias and Mr. Keys Arenas and the scenery and costumes are by Manolo Galan.

Other numbers on the program include "Fiesta En La Isla," "Salineras," "Punta y Tacon," "Tema y Variaconies," "Balada Galaica," "Soledad Montoya," "Idolos de Arena" and "El Paloma y La Paloma."

In addition to the members of the company previously mentioned, the troupe is headed by Rosario Galan, twin sister of Esperanza, with Antonio Espanol as first dancer. Others in the troupe include Carlos Vega, Juan Tapia, Carlos Camara, Maria Del Carmen and Maria Fabregas, mezzo-soprano. Marina Alonso is music director and Silvio Masciarelli will conduct the orchestra.

Information Desk

- *A new column designed to help the Dance Teacher — as well as the Dance Enthusiast!*

Q. My partner and I are getting set to open a small dancing school. We plan to teach mainly Ballet and Tap. What bothers us is the fact that several of the smaller schools in our area teach more than one kind of dancing in a single lesson. For instance, Tap, Acrobatic, Ballet and Baton, is what one school offers all in one lesson. Both my partner and I have spent much time and study in our specialties, Tap and Ballet. We also do a bit of Modern Jazz, Spanish, Hawaiian, etc. Would you advise us to keep up with our competition by combining several dances in one lesson, or should we specialize? We're quite anxious for some unbiased opinions in this matter.

A. It is the opinion of the editors of this magazine that if you specialize, as you say, in Ballet and Tap, that you should not find it necessary to crowd your lessons with a variety of subjects.

As you well know, Ballet is a study within itself and an hour's lesson is none too long if one is to do the subject justice. In the case of Tap dancing, it is feasible to combine a few Acrobatic exercises or some such conditioning and limbering exercises within the same lesson, but to include Baton,

Spanish, et al, within a single hour is not recommended.

Teachers who try to crowd so many different types of dances into a single lesson are doing both their students and themselves a grave injustice. The old axiom about being a "jack of all trades and a master of none" holds true in the teaching and learning of dancing.

If you indoctrinate your students and their parents when they first enter your studio as to why it is not practical to cram a dance lesson with a variety of different dances, you should have no difficulty in enrolling them. And in the long run, they will respect you for your sincerity.

This is not to say that many teachers are not good in a variety of subjects, but it is to say that the better teachers do not try to crowd all of their knowledge into a single lesson.

Bear in mind that a dance teacher's business is built on quality instruction — not on quantity.

- **If YOU have any questions pertaining to the Dance World, send them to:**
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The Dance Concert Company of Elmira, N. Y. (formerly Dance Concertante) artistic director, Mme. Halina, has added a new junior division to its older group. The Concert Company originated in 1955, the first of its kind in that area, its policy being that until now only dancers 15 years of age and older were eligible to perform. The junior group will fulfill the necessity of employing more dancers in its productions. The Company classes include creative choreography in which the students can inject their own ideas, discussion on relation of music to dance, as well as adagio.

Tracy Everitt, a ballet student of Madame Halina, and a promising young dancer of the company, left this summer to appear in the new Broadway hit, "The World of Susie Wong," produced by Josh Logan and now playing at the Broadhurst Theatre in New York.

Above, some members of the Dance Concert Company, left to right, Carol Mesko, Sharill Barkalow, Linda Bleaking, Donna Brooks and Allyne Harris.

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Six young members of the Alicia Alonso and Ballet de Cuba have just returned to their Havana homes after a four-month stay in the United States. These talented youngsters, Aurora Bosch, Loipa Araujo, Mirta Pla, Josefina Mendez, Margarita and Ramona de Saa (twins) performed at the Greek Theatre this summer in "La Perichole," and in the full-length production of "Giselle" starring Alicia Alonso and Igor Youskevitch. Following these engagements, the Cuban dancers went to San Francisco where they studied at the Conservatory of Dance, Merriem Lanova, director, and participated in a 4,500 mile tour of the West and Southwest as soloists of the Ballet Celeste, youthful performing company of the Conservatory.

"Won't You Dance With Me?"

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COVER: The South African artist, Vladmir Tretchikoff, whose painting 'Carnival' appears on this month's cover, has graced these pages on two previous occasions: Nov. 1953 and Dec. 1955.

Nancy Werbeach, student of the Jeanne Grand Square Studio in Madison, Ohio, has been dancing since the age of three. Nancy is also one of the models in the Taffy Dance Wear catalog called "Show Stoppers."
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NOTE: Dance Digest is presenting a new department entitled: "Know Your Ballroom Dancing," conducted by Thomas and Rogers. The steps which will appear each month are designed to give the beginning ballroom dancer authentic knowledge of accepted standards in the English or International style of ballroom dancing. Any questions concerning ballroom dancing may be directed to:

KNOW YOUR BALLROOM DANCING, c/o Dance Digest.
376 Almaden Avenue, San Jose 10, California.

(For an interesting article and talk given by Mr. Thomas before the National Ballroom Operators Association in New York City last year, see the January 1958 issue of Dance Digest. A few copies of this issue are still available at 35¢ each.)

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Movement	Direction	Rhythm
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2. R.F. Fwd.	Facing D.W.	S Parallel Position
3. L.F. Fwd.	Facing D.W.	Q Parallel position
4. R.F. Crosses behind L.F.	Facing D.W.	Q Parallel position
5. L.F. Fwd.	Facing D.W.	S Parallel Position
6. R.F. Fwd.	Facing D.W.	S Parallel Position
ZIG ZAG		
1. L.F. Fwd.	Facing L.O.D.	S
2. R.F.	Backing Wall	S
3. L.F.	Backing D.W.	S Parallel position
4. R.F. to Side small step (heel pull)	Facing L.O.D.	
5. L.F. Fwd.	Facing L.O.D.	S

NOTE: For all abbreviations, see August-September Dance Digest

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39. BUTTERFLIES

Place sash around pupil's body and hold both ends in middle of back. If pupil dooes butterflies to the left side, stand on left side and hold sash in right hand. For butterflies to the right, stand on right side and hold sash with left hand. Stand a few inches to the side and back of the pupil. As pupil pushes from floor with one leg, give a spin with hand holding sash and turn pupil over in the air. At all times stand to one side and slightly to the back of the pupil.

(See page 21 of, "Theory and Practice of Acrobatics and Tumbling.")

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